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| EXAMINER |
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HAQ, NAEEM U

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| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
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3625

DATE MAILED: 08/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-9, drawn to a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog by tracking purchases, collecting permission data, and monitoring online browsing, classified in class 705, subclass 26.
- II. Claims 10-22, drawn to a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog by providing contact information of a second user to a first user, classified in class 705, subclass 26.
- III. Claims 23-32, drawn to a system for assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog wherein the system has an item-to-user mapping table and a personalization process that uses the mapping table, classified in class 705, subclass 26.
- IV. Claims 33-43, drawn to a method of assisting users in evaluating a merchant by identifying a second user who is member of a community associated with a first user and who has engaged in business with the merchant, classified in class 705, subclass 26.
- V. Claims 44-52, drawn to an electronic catalog system, classified in class 705, subclass 27.
- VI. Claims 53-58, drawn to a method of assisting users in selecting items from an electronic catalog by maintaining purchase history and community data

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of users and by allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users on a community-by-community basis, classified in class 705, subclass 26.

- VII. Claims 59-64, drawn to a method of assisting users in selecting items from an electronic catalog by maintaining purchase history and community data of user and by allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users on a either an item-by-item basis or a user-by-user basis, classified in class 705, subclass 26.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I and II are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog that does not require tracking purchases, collecting permission data, and monitoring online browsing as required in invention I. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions I and III are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention I recites a process that can be practiced by

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another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require the item-to-user mapping table and personalization process of invention III.

Inventions I and IV are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog that does not require identifying a community associated with a user as required in invention IV. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions I and V are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention I recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require the database and personalization component of invention V.

Inventions I and VI are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog that does not require maintaining purchase history and community data of users or allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users on a community-by-community basis as required in invention VI. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

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Inventions I and VII are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog that does not require maintaining purchase history and community data of users or allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users on either an item-by-item basis or a user-by-user basis as required in invention VII. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions II and III are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention II recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require the item-to-user mapping table and personalization process of invention III.

Inventions II and IV are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog that does not require identifying a second user who is member of a community associated with a first user and who has engaged in business with the merchant as required in invention IV. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

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Inventions II and V are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention II recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require the database and personalization component of invention V.

Inventions II and VI are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog that does not require maintaining purchase history and community data of users or allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users on a community-by-community basis as required in invention VI. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions II and VII are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating items in an electronic catalog that does not require maintaining purchase history and community data of users or allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users on a either an item-by-item basis or a user-by-user basis as required in invention VII. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

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Inventions III and IV are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention IV recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require the database and personalization component of invention III.

Inventions III and V are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention V has separate utility such as an electronic catalog system that does not require an item-to-user mapping table as required in invention III. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions III and VI are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention VI recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require an item-to-user mapping table as required in invention III.

Inventions III and VII are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as

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claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention VI recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require an item-to-user mapping table as required in invention III.

Inventions IV and V are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention IV recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require the database and personalization component of invention V.

Inventions IV and VI are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention IV has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating a merchant that does not require maintaining purchase history and community data of users or allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users on a community-by-community basis as required in invention VI. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions IV and VII are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention IV has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in evaluating a merchant that does not

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require maintaining purchase history and community data of users or allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users on either an item-by-item basis or a user-by-user basis as required in invention VII. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions V and VI are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention VI recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require the database and personalization component of invention V.

Inventions V and VII are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In the present case, invention VII recites a process that can be practiced by another materially different apparatus such as a system that does not require the database and personalization component of invention V.

Inventions VI and VII are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention VI has separate utility such as a method of assisting users in selecting items from an electronic catalog that does not require allowing users to limit exposure of their purchases to other users

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on a either an item-by-item basis or a user-by-user basis as required in invention VII.

See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Because these inventions are independent or distinct for the reasons given above and the inventions require a different field of search (see MPEP § 808.02), restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Naeem Haq whose telephone number is (571)-272-6758. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey A. Smith can be reached on (571)-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Naeem Haq', written in a cursive style.

Naeem Haq, Primary Examiner
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August 6, 2006